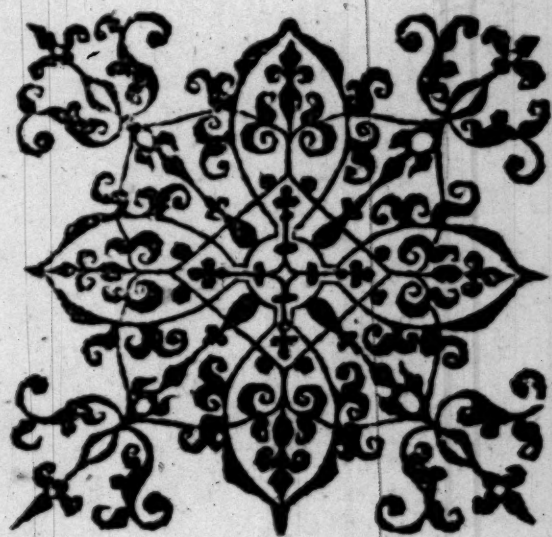


THE [7.]  
LOVE OF KING  
DAVID AND FAIR  
BETHSABE.

With the Tragedie of Absalon.

As it hath bene diuers times plaied on the stage.

*Written by George Peele.*

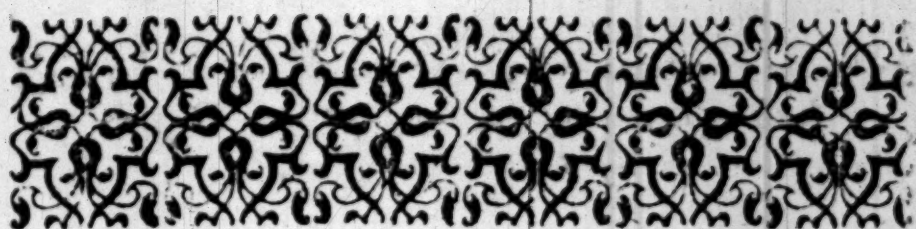


LONDON,  
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1599.







The loue of *Dauid* and faire *Bersabe*,  
with the Tragedie of *Absolon*.

*Prologus.*

**I**F Israels sweetest finger now I sing,  
His holy stile and happie victories,  
Whose Muse was dipt in that inspiring deaw,  
Arch-angels stilled from the breath of Ioue,  
Decking her temples with the glorious flowers,  
Heauens raine on tops of Syon and Mount Synai,  
Vpon the bosome of his yuorie Lute,  
The Cherubins and Angels laid their breasts,  
And when his consecrated fingers strooke  
The golden wiers of his rauishing harpe,  
He gaue alarm to the host of heauen,  
That wing'd with lightning, brake the clouds and cast  
Their christall armor, at his conquering feet.  
Of this sweet Poet Ioues Musition,  
And of his beauteous sonne I prease to sing.  
Then helpe deuine Adonay to conduct,  
Vpon the wings of my well tempered verse,  
The hearers minds aboue the towers of Heauen,  
And guide them so in this thrice haughty flight,  
Their mounting feathers scorch not with the fire,  
That none can temper but thy holy hand:  
To thee for succour flies my feeble muse,  
And at thy feet her yron Pendoth vse.

## David and Bethsabe.

*He drawes a curtaine, and discovers Bethsabe with her maid  
bathing euery a spring, she sings, and David  
sits above veyning her.*



Of sunne, coole fire, temperd with sweet aire,  
Black shade, fair nurse, shadow my white haire  
Shine sun, burne fire, breath aire, and ease mee,  
Black shade, fair nurse, shroud me and please me  
Shadow (my sweet nurse) keep me from burning  
Make not my glad cause, cause of mourning.  
Let not my beauties fire,  
Enflame vntaied desire,  
Nor pierce any bright-eye,  
That wandreth lightly.

*Bethsabe.* Come gentle Zephire trickt with those perfumes  
Thar erst in Eden sweetned Adams loue,  
And stroke my bosome with the silken fan:  
This shade (sun prooffe) is yet no prooffe for thee,  
Thy body smoother then this wauelesse spring,  
And purer then the substance of the same,  
Can creepe through that his launces cannot pierce,  
Thou and thy sister soft and sacred aire,  
Goddesse of life, and gouernesse of health,  
Keepes euery fountaine fresh and arbor sweet,  
No brasen gate, her passage can repulse,  
Nor bushly thicker, bar thy subtile breath,  
Then decke thee with thy loose delightful robes,  
And on thy wings bring delicate perfumes,  
To play the wantons with vs through the leaues,  
*Da.* What tunes, what words, what looks, what wonders pierce  
My soule, incensed with a suddain fire,  
What tree, what shade, what spring, what paradise  
Enioyes the beautie of so faire a dame?  
Faite Eua plac'd in perfect happinesse,



## *Dauid and Bethsabe.*

Lending her praise-notes to the liberall heauens,  
Strooke with the accents of Arch-angels tunes,  
Wrought not more pleasure to her husbands thoughts,  
Then this faire womans words and notes to mine.  
May that sweet plaine that beares her pleasant weight,  
Be still enameld with discoloured flowers,  
That precious fount, beare sand of purest gold,  
And for the Peble, let the siluer streames  
That pierce earths bowels to mainteine the force,  
Play vpon Rubies, Saphires, Chrisolites,  
The brims let be imbrac'd with golden curles  
Of mosse that sleepest with sound the waters make,  
For ioy to feed the fount with their recourse,  
Let all the grasse that beautifies her bower,  
Beare Manna euery morne in steed of dew,  
Or let the dew be sweeter far then that  
That hangs like chaines of pearle on Hermon hill,  
Or balme which trickled from old Arons beard.  
Cusay, come vp and serue thy lord the King. *Enter Cusay*

*Cus.* What seruice doth my lord the King command?

*Dauid.* See Cusay see, the flower of Israel,  
The fairest daughter that obeies the King,  
In all the land the lord subdued to me.  
Fairer then Isacs loue at the well,  
Brighter then inside barke of new hewen Cedar,  
Sweeter then flames of fine perfumed myrrhe.  
And comelier then the siluer clouds that dance  
On Zephires wings before the king of heauen.

*Cus.* Is it not Bethsabe the Hethites wife  
Vrias, now at Rabath siege with Ioab?

*Dauid.* Goe know, and bring her quickly to the King,  
Tell her, her graces hath found grace with him.

*Cusay.* I will my lord. *Exit Cusay to Bethsabe.*

*Dauid.* Bright Bethsabe shall wash in Dauids bower,  
In water mix'd with purest Almond flower,  
And bath her beautie in the milke of kids,

*David and Bersabe.*

Bright Bethsabe giues earth to my desires,  
Verdure to earth, and to that verdure flowers,  
To flowers, sweet Odors, and to Odors wings,  
That carrie pleasures to the hearts of Kings.

*Cusay to Bethsabe, she starting as something afright.*

*Cusay.* Faire Bethsabe, the King of Israell  
From forth his Princely tower hath seen thee bath,  
And thy sweet graces haue found grace with him,  
Come then and kneele vnto him where he stands,  
The King is gracious, and hath liberall hands.

*Beth.* Ah what is Bethsabe to please the King,  
Or what is David, that he should desire  
For fickle beuties sake his seruants wife?

*Cusay.* David (thou knowest faire dame) is wise and iust,  
Elected to the heart of Israels God,  
Then doe not thou expostulate with him  
For any action that contents his soule.

*Beth.* My lord the King, elect to Gods owne heart,  
Should not his gracious ielousie incense,  
Whose thoughts are chaste, I hate incontinence.

*Cusay.* Woman thou wrongst the King, & doubtst his ho-  
Whose truth mainteines the crowne of Israel, (nour,  
Making him stay, that bad me bring thee strait.

*Beth.* The Kings poore handmaid will obey my lord,

*Cus.* Then come and doe thy dutie to his grace,  
And doe what seemeth fauour in his sight.

*Exeunt.*

*David.* Now comes my louer ripping like the Roe,  
And brings my longings tangled in her haire,  
To ioy her loue Ile build a kingly bower,  
Seated in hearing of a hundred streames,  
That for their homage to her souereine ioies,  
Shall as the serpents fold into their nests,  
In oblique turnings wind the nimble waues,  
About the circles of her curious walks,

And



*David and Bethsabe.*

And with their murmur summon easfull sleepe,  
To lay his golden scepter on her browes,  
Open the dores, and enterteine my loue,  
Open I say, and as you open sing,  
Welcome faire Bethsabe King Dauids darling.

*Enter Cusay with Bethsabe.*

*David.* Welcome faire Bethsabe King Dauids darling,  
Thy bones faire couering, erst discovered faire,  
And all mine eyes with all thy beuties pierst,  
As heauens bright eye burnes most when most he climes  
The crooked Zodiake with his fierie sphere,  
And shineth furthest from this earthly globe:  
So since thy beutie scorcht my conquerd soule,  
I cald thee neerer for my neerer cure.

*Bethsa.* Too neere my lord was your vnarmed heart,  
When furthest off my haplesse beutie pierc'd,  
And would this dreerie day had turnd to night,  
Or that some pitchie cloud had clok'd the Sun,  
Before their lights had caus'd my lord to see  
His name disparag'd, and my chastitie.

*David.* My loue, if want of loue haue left thy soule,  
A sharper sence of Honor then thy King,  
(For loue leads Princes sometimes from their sears,)  
As erst my heart was hurt, displeasing thee,  
So come and tast thy ease, with easing me.

*Beth.* One medicine cannot heale our different harmes.  
But rather make both ranckle at the bone,  
Then let the King be cunning in his cure,  
Least flattering both, both perish in his hand.

*David.* Leaue it to me my deereft Bethsabe,  
Whose skill is conuersant in deeper cures,  
And Cusay hast thou to my seruant Ioab,  
Commanding him to send Vrias home  
With all the speed can possibly be vsed.

*Cusay.* Cusay will flie about the Kings desire.

*Exeunt.*

*Enter*

## David and Bethsabe.

*Ioab, Abisay, Vrias, and others, with drum and ensigne.*

*Ioab.* Courage ye mightie men of Israel,  
And charge your fatall instruments of war  
Vpon the bosomes of proud Ammons sonnes,  
That haue disguisd your Kings Embassadors,  
Cut halfe their beards, and halfe their garments off,  
In spight of Israel, and his daughters sonnes,  
Ye fight the holy battel of Iehoua,  
King Dauids God, and ours and Iacobs God  
That guides your weapons to their conquering strokes,  
Orders your footsteps, and directs your thoughts  
To stratagems that harbor victorie:  
He cast his sacred eie sight from on high,  
And sees your foes run seeking for their deaths,  
Laughing their labours and their hopes to scorne,  
While twixt your bodies, and their blunted swords,  
He puts on armor of his honors proöfe,  
And makes their weapons wound the fencelesse winds.

*Abis.* Before this citie Rabath we will lie,  
And shoot forth shafts as thicke and dangerous  
As was the haile that Moises mixt with fire,  
And threw with furie round about the fields  
Deuouring Pharoes friends, and Egypts fruits.

*Vrias.* First mighty captaines, Ioab and Abisay,  
Let vs assault and scale this kingly Tower,  
Where all their conduits and their fountaines are,  
Then we may easily take the citie too.

*Ioab.* Well hath Vrias counseld our attempts,  
And as he spake vs, so assault the Tower,  
Let Hanon now the king of Ammons sonne,  
Repulse our conquering passage if he dare.

*Hanon with King Machaas and others, vpon the wals.*

*Hanon.* What would the shepheards dogs of Israel  
Snatch from the mighty issue of King Ammon,  
The valiant Amonites, and haughty Syrians?



## David and Bethsabe.

Tis not your late successiue victories,  
Can make vs yeeld, or quail our courages,  
But if ye dare assay to scale this Tower,  
Our angrie swords shall smite ye to the ground,  
And venge our losses on your hatefull liues.

*Ioab.* Hanon, thy fathet Nahas gaue releefe  
To holy David in his haplesse exile,  
Lived his fixed date, and died in peace:

But thou in steed of reaping his reward,  
Hast trod it vnder foot, and scorned our King,  
Therefore thy daies shall end with violence,  
And to our swords thy vitall blood shall cleaue.

*Mach.* Hence thou that bearest poor Israels shepherds hook,  
The proud lieutenant of that base borne King,  
And kep within the compasse of his fold,  
For if ye seeke to feed on Ammons fruits,  
And stray into the Syrians fruitfull Medes,  
The mastiues of our land, shall werry ye,  
And pull the weefels from your greedy throates.

*Abis.* Who can indure these Pagans blasphemies,

*Vrias.* My soule repines at this disparagement.

*Ioab.* Assault ye valiant men of Davids host,  
And beat these railing dastards from their dores.

*Assault, and they win the Tower, and Ioab speaks againe.*

Thus haue we won the Tower, which we will keepe,  
Maugre the sonnes of Ammon, and of Syria.

*Enter Cusay beneath.*

*Cus.* Where is lord Ioab leader of the host?

*Ioab.* Here is lord Ioab, leader of the host.

*Cusay* come vp, for we haue won the hold. *He comes.*

*Cusay.* In happie hower then is *Cusay* come.

*Ioab.* What news then brings lord *Cusay* from the king?

*Cusay.* His maiestie commands thee out of hand  
To send him home *Vrias* from the wars,  
For matter of some seruice he should doe.

*Vrias,*

*David and Bersabe.*

*Vrias.* Tis for no choler hath surpris'd the King,  
(I hope lord Cusay) gainst his seruants truth.

*Cusay.* No rather to prefer Vrias truth.

*Ioab.* Here take him with thee then, and goe in peace,  
And tell my lord the King that I haue fought  
Against the citie Rabath with successe,  
And skaled where the royall pallace is,  
The conduit heads and all their sweetest springs,  
Then let him come in person to these wals,  
With all the souldiers he can bring besides,  
And take the city as his owne exploit,  
Least I surprise it, and the people giue  
The glory of the conquest to my name.

*Cus.* We will Lord Ioab, and great Israels God  
Blesse in thy hands the battels of our King.

*Ioab.* Farewell Vrias, hast away the King.

*Vrias.* As sure as Ioab breaths a victor here,  
Vrias will hast him, and his owne returne. *Exeunt.*

*Abisa.* Let vs descend, and ope the pallace gate,  
Taking our souldiors in to keepe the hold.

*Ioab.* Let vs Abisay, and ye sonnes of Iuda,  
Be valiant, and mainteine your victory. *Exeunt.*

*Ammon, Ionadab, Iethray, and Ammons page.*

*Ionad.* What meanes my lord, the Kings beloued son,  
That weares vpon his right triumphant arme,  
The power of Israel for a royall fauor,  
That holds vpon the Tables of his hands,  
Banquets of honor, and all thoughts content  
To suffer pale and grisely abstinence  
To sit and feed vpon his fainting cheekes,  
And sucke away the bloud that cheeres his lookes.

*Ammo.* Ah Ionadab it is my sisters lookes,  
On whose sweet beutie I bestow my bloud,  
That makes me looke so amorously leane,  
Her beautie hauing seafd vpon my heart,



*David and Berſabe.*

So merrily conſecrate to her content,  
Sets now ſuch guard about his vitall bloud,  
And viewes the paſſage with ſuch piercing eyes,  
That none can ſcape to cheare my pining cheekes,  
But all is thought too little for her loue.

*Iona.* Then from her heart thy lookes ſhall be releued,  
And thou ſhalt ioy her as thy ſoule deſires.

*Ammon.* How can it be my ſweet friend Ionadab,  
Since Thamar is a virgine and my ſiſter?

*Iona.* Thus it ſhall be, lie downe vpon thy bed,  
Faining thee feuer ſicke, and ill at eaſe,  
And when the king ſhall come to viſit thee,  
Deſire thy ſiſter Thamar may be ſent  
To dreſſe ſome deinties for thy maladie:  
Then when thou haſt her ſolely with thy ſelfe,  
Enforce ſome fauour to thy manly loue:  
See where ſhe comes, intreat her in with thee.

*Enter Thamar.*

*Thamar.* What aileth Ammon with ſuch ſickly lookes,  
To daunt the fauour of his louely face?

*Am.* Sweet Thamar ſick, & wiſh ſome wholeſome cates  
Dreſt with the cunning of thy daintie hands.

*Tham.* That hath the King commanded at my hands  
Then come and reſt thee, while I make thee readie  
Some dainties, eaſefull to thy crased ſoule.

*Am.* I goe ſweet ſiſter, eaſed with thy ſight.

*Exeunt. Reſtet Ionadab.*

*Ion.* Why ſhould a Prince, whoſe power may command,  
Obey the rebell paſſions of his loue,  
When they contend but gainſt his conſcience,  
And may be gouerned or ſuppreſt by will.  
Now Ammon loſe thoſe louing knot s of bloud,  
That ſokte the courage from thy kingly heart,  
And giue it paſſage to thy withered cheekes:  
Now Thamar ripened are the holy fruits

C

That

*David and Bethsabe.*

That grew on plants of thy virginittie,  
And rotten is thy name in Israel,  
Poore Thamar, little did thy lovely hands  
Foretell an action of such violence,  
As to contend with Ammons lusty armes,  
Sinnewd with vigor of his kindlesse loue,  
Faire Thamar now dishonour hunts thy foot,  
And followes thee through euery couert shade,  
Discouering thy shame and nakednesse  
Euen from the valeyes of Iehosopha,  
Vp to the losie mounts of Libanon,  
Where Cedars stird with anger of the winds,  
Sounding in stormes the tale of thy disgrace,  
Tremble with furie, and with murmure shake  
Eearth with their feet, and with their heads the heauens,  
Beating the clouds into their swiftest sacke,  
To beare this wonder round about the world. *Exit.*

*Ammon thrusting out Thamar.*

*Am.* Hence from my bed, whose sight offends my foule  
As doth the pabreake of disgorged beares.

*Tham.* Vnkind, vnprinceely, and vmanly Ammon,  
To force, and then refuse thy sisters loue:  
Adding vnto the fright of thy offence,  
The banefull torment of my publiſht shame,  
O doe not this dishonor to thy loue,  
Nor clog thy foule with such increasing sinne,  
This second euill far exceeds the first.

*Am.* Iethray come thrust this woman from my sight,  
And bolt the dore vpon hir if she strue.

*Iethray.* Go madame goe, away, you must be gone,  
My lord hath done with you, I pray depart. *He shuts her out.*

*Tham.* Whether alasle, ah whether shall I flie  
With folded armes, and all amased soule,  
Cast as was Eua from that glorious soile  
(Where al delights sat bating wingd with thoughts,

*Ready*



## David and Bethsabe.

Ready to nestle in her naked breasts)  
To bare and barraine vales with floods made wast,  
To desert woods, and hills with lightening scorcht,  
With death, with shame, with hell, with horrour sit,  
There will I wander from my fathers face,  
There Absolon, my brother Absolon,  
Sweet Absolon shall heare his sister mourne,  
There will I lue with my windie sighs,  
Night Ravens and Owles to rend my bloudie side,  
Which with a rustie weapon I will wound,  
And makee them passage to my panning heart:  
Why talkst thou wretch, and leavst the deed vndone.

*Enter Absolon.*

Rend haire and garments as thy heart is rent,  
With inward surie of a thousand greefes,  
And scatter them by these unhallowed dores,  
To figure Ammons resting crueltie,  
And Tragicke spoile of Thamar chastitie.

*Abs.* What causeth Thamar to exclaime so much?

*Tham.* The cause that Thamar shameth to disclose.

*Absa.* Say, I say brother will reuenge that cause.

*Tham.* Ammon our fathers son hath forced me,  
And thrusts me from him as the scorne of Israel.

*Abs.* Hath Ammon forced thee? by Dauids hand,  
And by the couenant God hath made with him,  
Ammon shall beare his violence to hell,  
Traitor to Heauen, traitor to Dauids throne,  
Traitor to Absolon and Israel.

This fact hath Iacobs ruler scene from heauen,  
And through a cloud of smoake, and tower of fire  
(As he rides vaunting him vpon the greenes)  
Shall teare his chariot wheelles with violent winds,  
And throw his body in the bloudy sea,  
At him the thunder shall discharge his bolt,  
And his faire spouse, with bright and fierie wings

*David and Bersabe.*

Sit euer burning on his hatefull bones,  
My selfe as swift as thunder, or his spouse,  
Will hunt occasion with a secret hate,  
To worke false Ammon an vngracious end :  
Goe in my filter, rest thee in my house,  
And God in time shall take this shame from thee.

*Tham.* Nor God nor Time will doe that good for me.

*Exit Tham. restat Absolon.*

*Enter David with his traine.*

*David.* My Absolon, what makst thou here alone,  
And beares such discontentment in thy browes ?

*Abs.* Great cause hath Absolon to be displeasd,  
And in his heart to shrowd the wounds of wrath.

*David.* Gainst whom should Absolon be thus displeasd?

*Abs.* Gainst wicked Ammon thy vngracious sonne,  
My brother and faire Thamars by the King,  
My stepbrother, by mother, and by kind,  
He hath dishonoured Davids holinesse,  
And fixt a blot of lightnesse on his throne,  
Forcing my sister Thamar when he found  
A sicknesse, sprung from root of heinous lust.

*David.* Hath Ammon brought this euill on my house,  
And suffered sinne to smite his fathers bones,  
Smite David deadlier then the voice of heauen,  
And let hates fire be kindled in thy heart,  
Frame in the arches of thy angrie browes,  
Making thy forehead like a comet shine,  
To force false Ammon tremble at thy lookes,  
Sin with his seuenfold crowne and purple robe,  
Begins his triumphs in my guiltie throne,  
There sits he watching with his hundred eyes,  
Our idle minuts, and our wanton thoughts,  
And with his baits made of our fraile desires,  
Giues vs the hooke that haies our soules to hell :  
But with the spirit of my kingdomes God,



*David and Berſabe.*

He thruſt the flattering Tyrant from his throne,  
And ſcourge his bondſlaues from my hallowed court  
With rods of yron, and thornes of ſharpened ſteele :  
Then Abſolon reuenge not thou this ſin,  
Leaue it to me, and I will chaſten him.

*Abs.* I am content, then graunt my lord the king  
Himſelfe with all his other lords would come  
Vp to my ſheepe feaſt on the plaine of Hazor.

*Da.* Nay my faire ſonne, my ſelfe with all my lords  
Will bring thee too much charge, yet ſome ſhall goe.

*Abs.* But let my lord the king himſelfe take paines,  
The time of yeare is pleaſant for your grace,  
And gladſome Summer in her ſhadie robes,  
Crowned with Roſes and with planted flowers,  
With all her nymphs ſhall enterreine my lord,  
That from the thicker of my verdant groues,  
Will ſprinckle hony dewes about his breaſt,  
And caſt ſweet balme vpon his kingly head,  
Then grant thy ſeruants boone, and goe my lord.

*Da.* Let it content my ſweet ſonne Abſolon,  
That I may ſtay and take my other lords.

*Abs.* But ſhall thy beſt beloued Ammon goe?

*Da.* What needeth it that Ammon goe with thee.

*Abs.* Yet doe thy ſonne and ſeruant ſo much grace.

*Da.* Ammon ſhall goe, and all my other lords,  
Because I will giue grace to Abſolon.

*Enter Cuſay, and Vrias, with others.*

*Cuſay.* Pleaſeth my lord the king, his ſeruant Ioab  
Hath ſent Vrias from the Syrian wars.

*Da.* Welcome Vrias from the Syrian wars,  
Welcome to David as his deereſt lord.

*Vrias.* Thankes be to Iſraels God, and Davids grace,  
Vrias finds ſuch greeting with the king.

*Da.* No other greeting ſhall Vrias find,  
As long as Davids ſwaies the elected ſeat,

## David and Bethsabe.

And consecrated throne of Israel.  
Tell me Vrias of my servant Iob;  
Fights he with truth the battels of our God,  
And for the honor of the Lords annointed?

Vrias. Thy seruants Iob fights the chosen wars  
With truth, with honour, and with high successe,  
And gainst the wicked King of Ammons sonnes,  
Hath by the finger of our soueraines God,  
Besieged the citie Rabath, and archieud  
The court of waters, where the conduits run,  
And all the Ammonites delightons springs:  
Therefore he wisheth Davids mightinesse  
Should number out the host of Israel,  
And come in person to the citie Rabath,  
That so her conquest may be made the kings,  
And Iob fight as his inferior.

David. This hath done God, and Iobs proweesse done,  
Without Vrias valours, I am sure,  
Who since his true conuersion from a Hechite,  
To an adopted sonne of Israel,  
Hath fought like one whose armes were list by heauen,  
And whose bright sword was edged with Israels wrath:  
Go therefore home Vrias, take thy rest,  
Visit thy wife and household with the ioyes  
A victor and a fauorite of the Kings  
Should exercise with honor after armes.

Vrias. Thy seruants bones are yet not halfe so crasse,  
Nor constitute on such a sickly mould,  
That for so little seruice he should faime,  
And seeke (as cowards) refuge of his home:  
Nor are his thoughts so sensually sturd,  
To stay the armes with which the lord would smite,  
And fill the world with his conquered soes,  
For wanton bosome of a flattering wife.

Da. Vrias hath a beauteous tober wife,  
Yet yong, and framed of tempting flesh and bloud,  
Then



*David and Bethsabe.*

Then when the King hath summoned thee from armes,  
If thou vnkindly shouldst refraine her bed,  
Sinne might be laid vpon Vrias soule,  
If Bethsabe by fraikie hurt her fame:  
Then goe Vrias, solace in her lone,  
Whom God hath knit to thee, tremble to lose.

*Vrias.* The King is much too tender of my ease,  
The arke, and Israel, and Iuda dwell  
In pallaces, and rich pauillions,  
But Ioab and his brother in the fields,  
Suffering the wrath of Winter and the Sun:  
And shall Vrias (of more shame then they)  
Banquet and loiter, in the worke of heauen?  
As sure as thy soule doth liue my lord,  
Mine eares shall neuer leane to such delight,  
When holy labour calls me forth to fight.

*David.* Then be it with Vrias manly heart,  
As best his fame may shine in Israel.

*Vrias.* Thus shall Vrias heart be best content,  
Till thou dismisse me backe to Ioabs bands,  
This ground before the king my mallets dores, *He lies downe.*  
Shall be my couch, and this vnwearied arme,  
The proper pillow of a souldiours head,  
For neuer will I lodge within my house,  
Till Ioab triumph in my secret vowes.

*David.* Then fetch some flagons of our purest Wine,  
That we may welcome home our hardie friend,  
With full carouses to his fortunes past,  
And to the honours of his future armes,  
Then will I send him backe to Rabath siege,  
And follow with the strength of Israel.

*Enter one with the flagons of Wine.*

Arise Vrias, come and pledge the King. *He riseth.*

*Vrias.* If David thinke me worthy such a grace,

*David and Bersabe.*

I will be bold, and pledge my lord the king.

*Dau.* Absolon and Cusay both shall drinke  
To good Vrias, and his happinesse.

*Abs.* We will my lord to please Vrias soula.

*Dau.* I will begin Vrias to thy selfe,  
And all the treasure of the Ammonites,  
Which here I promise to impart to thee,  
And bind that promise with a full carous.

*Vrias.* What seemeth pleasant in my souereines eyes,  
That shall Vrias doe till he be dead

*Dau.* Fill him the cup, follow ye lords that loue  
Your souereines health, and doe as he hath done.

*Abs.* Ill may he thrue or liue in Israel,  
That loues not David, or denies his charge. (uing friend.  
Vrias, Here is to Abisais health, lord Iobabs brother, & thy lo-

*Vrias.* I pledge lord Absolon and Abisais health. *He drinkes.*

*Cus.* Here now Vrias, to the health of Iobab,  
And to the pleasant iourney we shall haue,  
When we returne to mightie Rabath siege.

*Vrias.* Cusay I pledge thee all, with all my heart,  
Giue me some drinke ye seruants of the king,  
Giue me my drinke. *He drinkes.*

*Da.* Well done my good Vrias, drinke thy fill,  
That in thy fulnesse David may reioice.

*Vrias.* I will my lord.

*Abs.* Now lord Vrias, one carouse to me.

*Vrias.* No sir, Ile drinke to the King,  
Your father is a better man then you.

*Dau.* Doe so Vrias, I will pledge thee straight.

*Vrias.* I will indeed my lord and souereine,  
I once in my daies be so bold.

*David.* Fill him his glasse.

*Vrias.* Fill me my glasse. *He giues him the glasse.*

*Dau.* Quickly I say. *Vrias.* Quickly I say.

*Vrias.* Here my lord, by your fauour now I drinke to you.

*Dau.* I pledge thee good Vrias presently. *He drinkes.*

*Abs*



*David and Bersabe.*

*Abs.* Here then *Vrias*, once againe for me,  
And to the health of *Dauids* children.

*Vrias.* *Dauids* children?

*Abs.* I *Dauids* children, wilt thou pledge me man?

*Vrias.* Pledge me man.

*Abs.* Pledge me I say, or else thou louest vs not.

*Vrias.* What doe you talke, doe you talke?

Ile no more, Ile lie downe here.

*David.* Rather *Vrias* goe thou home and sleepe.

*Vrias.* O ho sir, would you make me break my sentence.

*He lies downe.*

Home sir, no indeed sir? Ile sleepe vpon mine arme,  
Like a souldiour, sleepe like a man as long as I liue in *Israel*.

*David.* If nought will serue to saue his wiues renowne,  
Ile send him with a letter vnto *Ioab*

To put him in the forefront of the wars,

That so my purposes may take effect.

Helpe him in firs.

*Exit David and Absolon.*

*Cusay.* Come rise *Vrias*, get thee in and sleepe.

*Vrias.* I will not goe home sir, thats flat.

*Cusay.* Then come and rest thee vpon *Dauids* bed.

*Vrias.* On afore my lords, on afore.

*Exeunt.*

*Chorus.*

O proud reuolt of a presumptuous man,  
Laying his bridle in the necke of sin,  
Ready to beare him past his graue to hell,  
Like as the fatall Rauen, that in his voice  
Carries the dreadfull summons of our deaths,  
Flies by the faire Arabian spiceries,  
Her pleasant gardens, and delightfome parkes,  
Seeming to curse them with his hoarse exclames,  
And yet doth stoope with hungrie violence  
Vpon a peece of hatefull carrion:  
So wretched man, displeasd with those delights,  
Would yeeld a quickning sauer to his Soule,

D

Pursues

*David and Bethsabe.*

Pursues with eage and vnstanched thirst,  
The greedie longings of his lothsome flesh,  
If holy David so shoke hands with sinne,  
What shall our baser spirits glorie in.  
This kingly giuing lust her raigne,  
Pursues the sequell with a greater ill.  
Vrias in the forefront of the wars,  
Is murdered by the hateful Heathens sword,  
And David ioies his too deere Bethsabe,  
Suppose this past, and that the child is borne,  
Whose death the Prophet solemnly doth mourne.

*Enter Bethsabe with her handmaid.*

*Beth.* Mourne Bethsabe, bewaile thy foolishnesse,  
Thy sinne, thy shame, the sorrow of thy soule,  
Sinne, shame, and sorrow swarme about thy soule,  
And in the gates and entrance of my heart,  
Sadnesse with wreathed armes hangs her complaint.  
No comfort from the ten stringed instrument,  
The twinckling Cymball, or the Yuorie Lute,  
Nor doth the sound of Dauids kingly Harpe,  
Make glad the broken heart of Bersabe.  
Ierusalem is fild with thy complaint,  
And in the streets of Syon sits thy greefe:  
The babe is sicke, sicke to the death I feare,  
The fruit that sprung from thee to Dauids house,  
Nor may the pot of Honny and of Oyle,  
Glad David or his handmaids countenance.  
Vrias, woe is me to thinke hereon,  
For who is it among the sonnes of men,  
That sayth not to my soule, the King hath sinned,  
David hath done amisse, and Bersabe  
Laid snares of death vnto Vrias life.  
My sweet Vrias, fallne into the pit  
Art thou, and gone euen to the gates of hell,

For



### *David and Bethsabe.*

For Bersabe, that wouldst not shrowd her shame.  
O what is it to serue the lust of Kings,  
How Lyonlike thy rage when we resist,  
But Bersabe in humblenesse attend,  
The grace that God will to his handmaid send.

*Exit Beths.*

*David in his gowne walking sadly, To him Nathan.*

The babe is sicke, and sad is Dauids heart,  
To see the guiltlesse beare the guilties paine.  
Dauid hang vp thy Harpe, hang downe thy head,  
And dash thy yuorie Lute against the stones.  
The dew that on the hill of Hermon fells,  
Raines not on Syons tops, and lostie towers,  
And Dauids thoughts are spent in pensiuenesse,  
The plaines of Gath and Askaron reioice.  
The babe is sicke, sweet babe, that Bersabe  
With womans paine brought forth to Israel.  
But what saith Nathan to his lord the king?

*Enter Nathan.*

*Nathan to David.*

*Nathan.* Thus Nathan saith vnto his Lord the King:  
There were two men both dwellers in one towne,  
The one was mighty and exceeding rich  
In Oxen, sheepe and cattell of the field,  
The other poore hauing nor Oxe, nor Calse,  
Nor other cattell, saue one little Lambe,  
Which he had bought and nourisht by the hand,  
And it grew vp, and fed with him and his,  
And eat and dranke as he and his were wont,  
And in his bosome slept, and was to liue  
As was his daughter or his dearest child.  
There came a stranger to this wealthy man,  
And he refus'd and spar'd to take his owne,  
Or of his store to dresse or make him meat,  
But tooke the poore mans sheepe, partly poore mans store,  
And drest it for this strangar in his house:  
What (tell me) shall be done to him for this?

## David and Bersabe.

*Dauid.* Now as the lord doth liue, this wicked man  
Is iudgd, and shall become the child of death,  
Foure sold to the poore man shall he restore,  
That without mercy tooke his lambe away.

*Nath.* Thou art the man, and thou hast iudgd thy selfe,  
Dauid, thus sayth the Lord thy God by me:  
I thee annointed King in Israel,  
And sau'd thee from the tyranny of Saul,  
Thy maisters house I gaue thee to possesse,  
His Wiues into thy bosome did I giue,  
And Iuda and Ierusalem withall,  
And might (thou knowest) if this had bent too small,  
Haue giuen thee more.  
Wherefore then hast thou gone so far astray,  
And hast done euill, and sinned in my sight?  
Vrias thou hast killed with the sword,  
Yea with the sword of the vncircumcised  
Thou hast him slaine, wherefore from this day forth,  
The sword shall neuer goe from thee and thine:  
For thou hast tane this Hethites wife to thee,  
Wherefore behold, I wil (saith Iacobs God)  
In thine owne house stir euill vp to thee,  
Yea I before thy face will rake thy Wiues,  
And giue them to thy neighbour to possesse:  
This shall be done to Dauid in the day,  
That Israel openly may see thy shame.

*Dauid.* Nathan, I haue against the Lord, I haue  
Sinned, O sinned greuously, and loe  
From heauens throne doth Dauid throw himselfe,  
And grone and grouell to the gates of hell. *He fals downe.*

*Nath.* Dauid stand vp, Thus saith the Lord by me,  
Dauid the King shall liue, for he hath scene  
The true repentant sorrow of thy heart,  
But for thou hast in this misdeed of thine  
Stird vp the enemies of Israel  
To triumph and blaspheme the God of hosts,

And



*'David and Bersabe.*

And say, He set a wicked man to reigne,  
Ouer his loued people and his Tribes:  
The child shall surely die, that erst was borne,  
His mothers sin, his kingly fathers scorne.

*Exit Nathan.*

*Da.* How iust is Iacobs God in all his workes!  
But must it die that Dauid loueth so?  
O that the mighty one of Israel  
Nill change his dome, and sayes the babe must die,  
Mourne Israel and weepe in Syon gates,  
Wither ye Cædar trees of Libanon,  
Ye sprouting Almons with your flowring tops,  
Droope, drowne, and drench in Hebrons fearefull streames,  
The babe must die that was to Dauid borne,  
His mothers sin his kingly fathers scorne.

*Dauid sits sadly.*

*Enter Cusay to Dauid and his traine.*

*Seruus.* What tidings bringeth Cusay to the King?

*Cusay.* To thee the seruant of King Dauids court,  
This bringeth Cusay, as the Prophet spake,  
The Lord hath surely stricken to the death,  
The child new borne by that Vrias wife,  
That by the sonnes of Ammon erst was slaine.

*Seruus.* Cusay be still, the King is vexed sore,  
How shal he speed that brings this tidings first,  
When while the child was yet aliue, we spake,  
And Dauids heart would not be comforted?

*Da.* Yea Dauids heart will not be comforted,  
What murmure ye the seruants of the King,  
What tidings telleth Cusay to the King?  
Say Cusay, liues the child, or is he dead?

*Cusay.* The child is dead, that of Vrias wife, Dauid begat.

*Da.* Vrias wife saiest thou?  
The child is dead, then ceaseth Dauids shame,  
Fetch me to eat, and giue me Wine to drinke,

*David and Bethsabe.*

Water to wash, and Oyle to cleere my lookes,  
Bring downe your Shalmes, your Cymbals, and your Pipes,  
Let Davids Harpe and Lute, his hand and voice,  
Giue laud to him that loveth Israel,  
And sing his praise, that shendeth Davids fame,  
That put away his sinne from out his sight,  
And sent his shame into the streets of Gath,  
Bring ye to me the mother of the babe,  
That I may wipe the teares from off her face,  
And giue her comfort with this hand of mine,  
And decke faire Bersabe with ornaments,  
That she may beare to me another sonne,  
That may be loued of the Lord of hosts:  
For where he is, of force must David goe,  
But neuer may he come where David is.

*They bring in water, wine, and oyle, Musike, and a banquet.*

Faire Bersabe, sit thou, and sigh no more,  
And sing and play you seruants of the King,  
Now sleepeeth Davids sorrow with the dead,  
And Bersabe liueth to Israel.

*They vse all solemnities together, and sing, &c.*

*David.* Now armes, and warlike engines for assault,  
Prepare at once ye men of Israel,  
Ye men of Iuda and Ierusalem,  
That Rabba may be taken by the King,  
Least it be called after Iobabs name,  
Nor Davids glory shine in Syon streets,  
To Rabba marcheth David with his men  
To chastise Ammon and the wicked ones.

*Exeunt omnes.*

*Enter Absolon with two or three.*

*Abs.* Set vp your mules, and giue them well to ear,  
And let vs meet our brothers at the feast,  
Accursed is the maister of this feast,

*Dishonour*



*David and Bethsabe.*

Dishonour of the house of Israel,  
His sisters slander, and his mothers shame.  
Shame be his share that could such ill contriue,  
To rauish Thamar, and without a pause  
To driue her shamefully from out his house,  
But may his wickednesse find iust reward.  
Therefore doth Absolon conspire with you,  
That Ammon die what time he sits to eat,  
For in the holy Temple haue I sworne  
Wreake of his villany in Thamars rape.  
And here he comes, bespeake him gently all,  
Whose death is deeply graued in my heart.

*Enter Ammon with Adonia and Ionadab, to Absolon  
and his companie.*

*Am.* Our shearers are not far from hence I wor,  
And Ammon, to you all his brethren  
Giue such welcome as our fathers erst  
Were won in Iuda and Ierusalem,  
But specially Lord Absolon to thee,  
The honour of thy house and progenie.  
Sit downe and dine with me King Dauids sonne,  
Thou faire young man, whose haire shine in mine eye  
Like golden wyers of Dauids yuorie Lute.

*Abs.* Ammon, where be thy shearers and thy men,  
That we may powre in plenty of thy vines,  
And eat thy goats milke, and reioice with thee.

*Am.* Here cometh Ammons shearers and his men,  
Absolon sit and reioice with me.

*Here enter a company of shepheards, and  
daunce and sing.*

*Am.* Drinke Absolon in praise of Israel,  
We come to Ammons fields from Dauids court.

*Abs.* Die with thy draught perishe and die accurst,

Dishonour

*David and Bersabe.*

Dishonour to the honour of vs all,  
Die for the villany to Thamar done,  
Vnworthy thou to be Kings Dauids sonne. *Exit Absa.*

*Ionad.* O what hath Absolon for Thamar done,  
Murthred his brother, great king Dauids sonne.

*Adon.* Run Ionadab away, and make it knowne,  
What cruelty this Absolon hath showne.

Ammon, thy brother Adonia shall  
Bury thy body among the dead mens bones,  
And we will make complaint to Israel  
Of Ammons death, and pride of Absolon. *Exeunt omnes.*

*Enter David with Ioab, Abyssus, Cusay, with drum and  
ensigne against Rabba.*

This is the towne of the vncircumcised,  
The citie of the kingdome, this is it,  
Rabba where wicked Hannon sitteth king:  
Dispoile this King, this Hannon of his crowne,  
Vnpeople Rabba, and the streets thereof,  
For in their blood and slaughter of the slaine,  
Lyeth the honor of King Dauids line.  
Ioab, Abyshai, and the rest of you,  
Fight ye this day for great Ierusalem.

*Ioab.* And see where Hannon shewes him on the wals,  
Why then do we forbear to giue assault,  
That Israel may as it is promised,  
Subdue the daughters of the Gentils Tribes,  
All this must be performed by Dauids hand.

*Da.* Harke to me Hannon, and remember well,  
As sure as he doth liue that kept my host,  
What time our young men by the poole of Gibeon,  
Went forth against the strength of Isboseth,  
And twelue to twelue did with their weapons play,  
So sure art thou, and thy men of war  
To feele the sword of Israel this day,

Because



*David and Bersabe.*

Because thou hast defied Iacobs God,  
And suffered Rabba with the Philistime  
To raile vpon the tribe of Benjamin,

*Hannon.* Harke man, as sure as Saul thy maister fell,  
And gord his sides vpon the mountaine tops  
And Ionathan, Abinadab, and Melchisua  
Watted the dales and deepes of Askaron  
With bloody streames that from Gilboa ran  
In channels through the wildernesse of Ziph,  
What time the sword of the vncircumised  
Was drunken with the bloud of Israel:  
So sure shall David perish with his men,  
Vnder the wals of Rabba, Hannons towne.

*Isab.* Hannon, the God of Israel hath said,  
David the King shall weare that crowne of thine,  
That weighs a Talent of the finest gold,  
And triumph in the spoile of Hannons towne,  
When Israel shall hale thy people hence,  
And turne them to the tile-kill, man and child,  
And put them vnder harrowes made of yron,  
And hew their bones with axes, and their limbs  
With yron swords deuide and teare in twaine.  
Hannon, this shall be done to thee and thine,  
Because thou hast defied Israel.  
To armes, to armes, that Rabba feele reuenge,  
And Hannons towne become king Davids spoile.

*Alarum, excursions, assault, Exeunt omnes. Then the trumpets, and  
David with Hannons crowne.*

*Dav.* Now clattering armes, and wrathfull storms of war,  
Haue thundred ouer Rabbaes rased towers,  
The wreakefull ire of great Iehouaes arme,  
That for his people made the gates to rend,  
And clothed the Cherubins in fierie coats,  
To fight against the wicked Hannons towne,

*David and Bethsabe.*

Pay thanks ye men of Iuda to the King,  
The God of Syon and Ierusalem,  
That hath exalted Israel to this,  
And crowned Dauid with this diademe.

*Ioab.* Beauteous and bright is he among the Tribes,  
As when the sunne attird in glist'ring robe,  
Comes dauncing from his orientall gate,  
And bridegroome-like hurles through the gloomy aire  
His radiant beames, such doth King Dauid shew,  
Crownd with the honour of his enemies towne,  
Shining in riches like the firmament,  
The starrie vault that ouerhangs the earth,  
So looketh Dauid King of Israel.

*Abyhai.* Ioab, why doth not Dauid mount his throne,  
Whom heauen hath beautified with Hannons crowne,  
Sound Trumpets, Shalmes, and Instruments of praise  
To Iacobs God for Dauids victory.

*Enter Ionadab.*

*Ionadab.* Why doth the King of Israel reioice,  
Why sitteth Dauid crownd with Rabbaes rule,  
Behold there hath great heauinesse befallne  
In Ammons fields by Absolons misdeed,  
And Ammons shearers, and their feast of mirth  
Absalon hath ouerturned with his sword,  
Nor liueth any of King Dauids sonnes,  
To bring this bitter tidings to the King.

*Dauid.* Ay me, how soone are Dauids triumphs dastir,  
How suddenly declineth Dauids pride,  
As doth the daylight fettle in the west,  
So dim is Dauids glory, and his gite.  
Die Dauid, for to thee is left no seed,  
That may reuiue thy name in Israel.

*Iona.* In Israel is left of Dauids seed.

*Enter Adonia with other sonnes.*

Comfort your lord, you seruants of the King,

Behold



*David and Bethsabe.*

Behold thy sonnes returne in mourning weeds,  
And only Ammon, Absalon hath slaine.

*Da.* Welcome my sonnes, deere to me you are  
Then is this golden crowne, or Hannons spoile,  
O tell me then, tell me my sonnes I say,  
How cometh it to passe, that Absolon  
Hath slaine his brother Ammon with the sword?

*Ado.* Thy sonnes O King went vp to Ammons fields  
To feast with him, and eat his bread and oyle,  
And Absalon vpon his mule doth come,  
And to his men he sayth, When Ammons heart  
Is merry and secure, then strike him dead,  
Because he forced Thamar shamefully,  
And hated her, and threw her forth his dores:  
And this did he, and they with him conspire,  
And kill thy sonne in wreake of Thamars wrong.

*David.* How long shall Iuda and Ierusalem  
Complaine and water Syon with their teares?  
How long shall Israel lament in vaine,  
And not a man among the mighty ones  
Will heare the sorrowes of King Davids heart?  
Ammon thy life was pleasing to thy Lord,  
As to mine eares the Musike of my Lute,  
Or songs that David tuneth to his Harpe,  
And Absalon hath tane from me away  
The gladnesse of my sad distressed soule. *Exeunt omnes.*

*Manet David, Enter widdow of Thecoa.*

*Widdow.* God saue King David, King of Israel,  
And blesse the gates of Syon for his sake.

*Da.* Woman, why mournest thou, rise from the earth,  
Tell me what sorrow hath befallne thy soule.

*Widdow.* Thy seruants soule O King is troubled sore,  
And greenous is the anguish of her heart,  
And from Thecoa doth thy handmaid come.

*David.* Tell me, and say, thou woman of Thecoa,

E ij

What

*David and Bersabe.*

What aileth thee, or what is come to passe.

*Widdow.* Thy seruant is a widdow in Thecoa,  
Two sonnes thy handmaid had, and they (my lord)  
Fought in the field, where no man went betwixt,  
And so the one did smite and slay the other.  
And loe behold the kindred doth arise,  
And crie on him that smote his brother,  
That he therefore may be the child of death,  
For we will follow and destroy the heire.  
So will they quench that sparkle that is left,  
And leaue nor name, nor issue on the earth,  
To me, or to thy handmaids husband dead.

*David.* Woman returne, goe home vnto thy house,  
I will take order that thy sonne be safe,  
If any man say otherwise then well,  
Bring him to me, and I shall chastise him :  
For as the Lord doth liue, shall not a haire  
Shed from thy sonne, or fall vpon the earth.  
Woman to God alone belongs reuenge,  
Shall then the kindred slay him for his sinne?

*Widdow.* Well hath King David to his handmaid spoke,  
But wherefore then hast thou determined  
So hard a part against the righteous Tribes.  
To follow and pursue the banished,  
When as to God alone, belongs reuenge.  
Assuredly thou saist against thy selfe,  
Therefore call home againe the banished,  
Call home the banished, that he may liue,  
And raise to thee some fruit in Israel.

*Da.* Thou woman of Thecoa answer me,  
Answer me one thing I shall aske of thee,  
Is not the hand of Ioab in this worke?  
Tell me is not his finger in this fact?

*Wid.* It is my lord, his hand is in this worke,  
Assure thee, Ioab captaine of thy host,  
Hath put these words into thy handmaids mouth,

And



*David and Bersabe.*

And thou art as an angel from on high,  
To vnderstand the meaning of my heart,  
Lo where he commeth to his lord the King.

*Enter Ioab.*

*David.* Say Ioab, didst thou send this woman in  
To put this parable for Absalon.

*Ioab.* Ioab my lord did bid this woman speake,  
And she hath said, and thou hast vnderstood.

*David.* I haue and am content to do the thing,  
Goe fetch my sonne, that he may liue with me.

*Ioab kneeles.*

*Ioab.* Now God be blessed for King Dauids life,  
Thy seruant Ioab hath found grace with thee,  
In that thou sparest Absolon thy child,  
A beautifull and faire young man is he,  
In all his bodie is no blemish seene,  
His haire is like the wyer of Dauids Harpe,  
That twines about his bright and yuorie necke:  
In Israel is not such a goodly man,  
And here I bring him to entreat for grace.

*Enter Absolon with Ioab.*

*David.* Hast thou slaine in the fields of Hazon  
Ah Absalon my sonne, ah my sonne Absolon,  
But wherefore doe I vexe thy spirit so,  
Liue and returne from Gesur to thy house,  
Returne from Gesur to Ierusalem,  
What boots it to be bitter to thy soule,  
Ammon is dead, and Absolon suruiues.

*Abs.* Father I haue offended Israel,  
I haue offended David and his house,  
For Thamars wrong hath Absolon misdone,  
But Dauids heart is free from sharpe reuenge,  
And Ioab hath got grace for Absalon.

E iij

*David.*

*David and Bethsabe.*

*David.* Depart with me you men of Israel,  
You that haue followed Rabba with the sword,  
And ranlacke Ammons richest treasures,  
Liue Absalon my sonne, liue once in peace,  
Peace with thee, and with Ierusalem.

*Exeunt omnes.*

*Manet Absolon.*

*Abs.* David is gone, and Absolon remaines,  
Flowring in pleasant spring time of his youth,  
Why liueth Absolon, and is not honoured  
Of Tribes and Elders, and the mightiest ones,  
That round about his Temples he may weare  
Garlands and wreaths set on with reuerence,  
That euery one that hath a cause to plead,  
Might come to Absolon, and call for right?  
Then in the gates of Syon would I sit,  
And publish lawes in great Ierusalem,  
And not a man should liue in all the land,  
But Absolon would doe him reasons due,  
Therefore I shall addresse me as I may,  
To loue the men and Tribes of Israel.

*Exit.*

*Enter David, Ishay, Sadoc, Ahimaas, Jonathan, with others,  
David barefoot, with some lose couering ouer his  
head, and all mourning.*

*Dau.* Proud lust the bloudiest traitor to our soules,  
Whose greedie throte, nor earth, aire, sea, or heauen,  
Can glut or satisfie with any store,  
Thou art the cause these tortments sucke my bloud,  
Piercing with venome of thy poysoned eies,  
The strength and marrow of my tainted bones:  
To punish Pharaoh, and his cursed host,  
The waters shrink at great Adonaies voice,

*And*



*David and Bethsabe.*

And sandie bottome of the sea appeard,  
Offering his seruice at his seruants feet,  
And to inflict a plague on Davids sinne,  
He makes his bowels traitors to his breast,  
Winding about his heart with mortall gripes.  
Ah Absalon the wrath of heauen inflames  
Thy scorched bosome with ambitious heat,  
And Sathan sets thee on a lustie tower,  
Shewing thy thoughts the pride of Israel  
Of choice to cast thee on her ruthlesse stones,  
Weepe with me then ye sonnes of Israel.

*He lies downe, and all the rest after him.*

Lie downe with David, and with David mourne,  
Before the holy one that sees our hearts,  
Season this heauie soile with showers of teares,  
And fill the face of euery flower with dew,  
Weepe Israel, for Davids soule dissolues,  
Lading the fountaines of his drowned eyes,  
And powres her substance on the sencelesse earth.

*Sadoc.* Weepe Israel, O weepe for Davids soule,  
Strewing the ground with haire and garments torne,  
For tragicke witnessse of your heartie woes.

*Abimaas.* O would our eyes were conduits to our hearts,  
And that our hearts were seas of liquid bloud,  
To powre in streames vpon this holy Mount,  
For witnessse we would die for Davids woes.

*Iona.* Then should this mount of Oliues seeme a plaine,  
Drownd with a sea, that with our sighs should rore,  
And in the murmur of his mounting waues,  
Report our bleeding sorrowes to the heauens,  
For witnessse we would die for Davids woes.

*Ith.* Earth cannot weepe ynough for Davids woes,  
Then weepe you heauens, and all you clouds dissolue,  
That pittious stars may see our miseries,  
And drop their golden teares vpon the ground,  
For witnessse how they weepe for Davids woes.

*Sadoc.*

*David and Bersabe.*

*Sadoc.* Now let my soueraigne raise his prostrate bones,  
And mourne not as a faithlesse man would doe,  
But be assur'd, that Iacobs righteous God,  
That promitt neuer to forsake your throne,  
Will still be iust and pure in his vower.

*Da.* Sadoc high priest, preseruer of the arke,  
Whose sacred vertue keeps the chosen crowne,  
I know my God is spotlesse in his vower,  
And that these haire shall greet my graue in peace:  
But that my sonne should wrong his tendred soule,  
And fight against his fathers happinesse,  
Turnes all my hopes into despaire of him,  
And that despaire, feeds all my veines with greefe.

*Ithay.* Thinke of it Dauid, as a fatall plague,  
Which greefe preserueth, but preuenteth not,  
And turne thy drooping eyes vpon the troupes  
That of affection to thy worthinesse,  
Doe swarme about the person of the King,  
Cherish their valours, and their zealous loues,  
With pleasant lookes, and sweet encouragements.

*Da.* Me thinkes the voice of Ithay fills mine eares.

*Ith.* Let not the voice of Ithay loth thine eares,  
Whose heart would baulme thy bosome with his teares.

*Dauid.* But wherefore goest thou to the wars with vs,  
Thou art a stranger here in Israel,  
And sonne to Achis mightie king of Gath,  
Therefore returne, and with thy father stay,  
Thou camst but yesterday, and should I now  
Let thee partake these troubles here with vs?  
Keepe both thy selfe, and all thy souldiers safe,  
Let me abide the hazards of these armes,  
And God requite the friendship thou hast shewd.

*Ith.* As sure as Israels God giues Dauid life,  
What place or perill shall containe the King,  
The same will Ithay share in life and death.

*Da.* Then gentle Ithay be thou still with vs,



*David and Bersabe.*

A ioy to David, and a grace to Israel.  
Goe Sadoc now, and beare the arke of God  
Into the great Ierusalem againe,  
If I find fauour in his gracious eyes,  
Then will he lay his hand vpon my heart  
Yet once againe before I visit death,  
Giuing it strength and vertue to mine eies,  
To talke the comforts, and behold the forme  
Of his faire arke, and holy tabernacle,  
But if he say my wonted loue is worne,  
And I haue no delight in David now,  
Here lie I armed with an humble heart,  
T'imbrace the paines that anger shall impose,  
And kisse the sword my lord shall kill me with,  
Then Sadoc take Ahimaas thy sonne,  
With Ionathan sonne to Abiathar,  
And in these fields will I repose my selfe,  
Till they returne from you some certaine newes.

*Sadoc.* Thy seruants will with ioy obey the King,  
And hope to cheere his heart with happy newes.

*Exit Sadoc, Ahimaas, and Ionathan.*

*Ith.* Now that it be no greefe vnto the King,  
Let me for good enforme his maiestie,  
That with vnkind and gracelesse Absalon,  
Achitophel your auncient counsellor,  
Directs the state of this rebellion.

*David.* Then doth it aime with danger at my crowne,  
O thou that holdst his raging bloody bound,  
Within the circle of the siluer moone,  
That girds earths center with his watric scarfe,  
Limit the counsell of Achitophel,  
No bounds extending to my soules distresse,  
But turne his wisdom into foolishnesse.

*Enter Cusay with his coat turnd, and head couered.*

*Cusay.* Happinesse and honour to my lord the King,

F

*De.*

*David and Bethsabe.*

*David.* What happinesse or honor may betide  
His state that toiles in my extremities?

*Cus.* O let my gracious soueraigne cease these greefes,  
Vnlesse he wish his seruaut Cusayes death,  
Whose life depends vpon my lords releefe,  
Then let my presence with my sighs, persume  
The pleasant closet of my soueraignes soule.

*Da.* No Cusay no, thy presence vnto me,  
Will be a burthen since I tender thee,  
And cannot breake thy sighs for Dauids sake:  
But if thou turne to faire Ierusalem,  
And say to Absalon, as thou hast been  
A trusty friend vnto his fathers seat,  
So thou wilt be to him, and call him King,  
Ahitophels counsell may be brought to naught.  
Then hauing Sadoc and Abiathar,  
All three may learne the secrets of my sonne,  
Sending the message by Ahimaas,  
And friendly Jonathan, who both are there,  
Then rise, referring the successe to heauen.

*Da.* Cusay I rise, though with vnweldie bones,  
I carrie armes against my Absalon.

*Exeunt.*

*Absalon, Amasa, Achitophel, with the concubines of David, and  
others in great state, Absalon crowned.*

*Abs.* Now you that were my fathers concubines,  
Liquor to his inchaist and lustfull fire,  
Haue seene his honour shaken in his house,  
Which I possesse in sight of all the world.  
I bring ye forth for soiles to my renowne,  
And to eclipse the glorie of your King,  
Whose life is with his honour fast inclosd  
Within the entrailes of a Ieatie cloud,  
Whose dissolution shall powre downe in showers  
The substance of his life and swelling pride:

*Then*



## David and Bethsabe.

Then shall the stars light earth with rich aspects,  
And heauen shall burne in loue with Absalon,  
Whose beaurie will suffice to chaste all mists,  
And cloth the suns spheare with a triple fire,  
Sooner then his cleare eyes should suffer staine,  
Or be offended with a lowring day.

*Concub.* Thy fathers honour, gracelesse Absalon,  
And ours thus beaten with thy violent armes,  
Will crie for vengeance to the host of heauen,  
Whose power is euer armed against the prowde,  
And will dart plagues at thy aspiring head,  
For doing this disgrace to Dauids throne.

2. To Dauids throne, to Dauids holy throne,  
Whose scepter angels guard with swords of fire,  
And sit as Eagles on his conquering fist,  
Ready to prey vpon his enemies,  
Then thinke not thou the captaine of his foes,  
Wert thou much swifter then Azahell was,  
That could out-pace the nimble footed Roe,  
To scape the furie of their thumping beakes,  
Or dreadfull scope of their commanding wings.

*Achip.* Let not my lord the King of Israel  
Be angrie with a sillie womans threats,  
But with the pleasure he hath erst emioied,  
Turne them into their cabinets againe,  
Till Dauids conquest be their ouerthrow.

*Abs.* Into your bowers ye daughters of Dildaine,  
Gotten by furie of vnbridled lust,  
And wash your couches with your mourning teares,  
For greefe that Dauids kingdome is decaied.

1. No Absalon, his kingdome is enchained  
Fast to the finger of great Iacobs God,  
Which will not lose it for a rebels loue.

*Exeunt.*

*Amasa.* If I might giue aduise vnto the King,  
These concubines should buy their taunts with bloud.

*Abs.* Amasa no, but let thy martiall sword

*David and Berſabe.*

Empty the paines of Davids armed men,  
And let theſe fooliſh women ſcape our hands  
To recompence the ſhame they haue ſuſtaind.  
Fiſt Abſolon was by the Trumpets ſound  
Proclaimd through Hebron King of Iſrael,  
And now is ſet in faire Ieruſalem  
With complete ſtate, and glorie of a crowne.  
Fiftie faire footmen by my chariot run,  
And to the aire whoſe rupture rings my fame,  
Where ere I ride they offer reuerence.  
Why ſhould not Abſolon, that in his face  
Carries the finall purpoſe of his God,  
That is, to worke him grace in Iſrael,  
Endeuour to atchieue with all his ſtrength,  
The ſtate that moſt may ſatiſfie his ioy,  
Keeping his ſtatutes and his couenants pure,  
His thunder is intangled in my haire,  
And with my beautie is his lightning quencht,  
I am the man he made to glorie in,  
When by the errors of my fathers ſinne,  
He loſt the path that led into the land,  
Wherewith our choſen anceſtors were bleſt.

*Enter Cuſay.*

*Cuſ.* Long may the beautious King of Iſrael liue,  
To whom the people doe by thouſands ſwarme.

*Abſ.* What meaneth Cuſay ſo to greet his foe,  
Is this the loue thou ſhewdſt to Davids ſoule,  
To whoſe aſſiſtance thou haſt vowed thy life,  
Why leaneſt thou him in this extremitie.

*Cuſ.* Becauſe the Lord and Iſrael chuſeth thee,  
And as before I ſerud thy fathers turne,  
With counſell acceptable in his fight,  
So likewise will I now obey his ſonne.

*Abſ.* Then welcome Cuſay to king Abſalon,  
And now my lords and louing counſellors,  
I thinke it time to exerciſe our armes

Againſt



*David and Bersabe.*

Against forsaken Dauid and his host,  
Giue counsell first my good Achitophel,  
What times and orders we may best obserue,  
For prosperous manage of the high exploits.

*Achi.* Let me chuse out twelue thousand valiant men,  
And (while the night hides with her sable mists  
The close endeuors cunning souldiers vse)  
I will assault thy discontented fire,  
And while with weakenesse of their wearie armes,  
Surchargd with toile to shun thy suddaine power,  
The people flie in huge disordred troupes  
To saue their liues, and leaue the King alone,  
Then will I smite him with his latest wound,  
And bring the people to thy feet in peace.

*Abs.* Well hath Achitophel giuen his aduise,  
Yet let vs heare what Cusay counsels vs,  
Whose great experience is well worth the care.

*Cus.* Though wise Achitophel be much more meet  
To purchase hearing with my lord the King,  
For all his former counsels, then my selfe,  
Yet not offending Absolon or him,  
This time it is not good, nor worth pursue:  
For well thou knowest thy fathers men are strong,  
Chafing as shee beares robbed of their whelpes.  
Besides the King himselfe a valiant man,  
Traind vp in feats and stratagems of warre,  
And will not for preuention of the worst  
Lodge with the common souldiers in the field:  
But now I know his wonted policies  
Haue taught him lurke within some secret caue,  
Guarded with all his stoutest souldiers,  
Which if the forefront of his battell faint,  
Will yet giue out that Absalon doth flie,  
And so thy souldiers be discouraged.  
Dauid himselfe withall, whose angry heart  
Is as a Lyons, letted of his walke,

*David and Bethsabe.*

Will fight himselfe, and all his men to one,  
Before a few shall vanquish him by feare.  
My counsell therefore, is with Trumpets sound  
To gather men from Dan to Bersabe,  
That they may march in number like sea sands,  
That nestle close in anothers neckes  
So shall we come vpon him in our strength,  
Like to the dew that fells in showers from heauen,  
And leaue him not a man to march withall.  
Besides if any citie succour him,  
The numbers of our men shall fetch vs ropes,  
And we will pull it downe the riuers streame,  
That not a stone be left to keepe vs out.

*Abs.* What saies my lord to Cusaies counsell now?

*Ama.* I fancie Cusaies counsell better farre  
Then that is giuen vs from Achitophel,  
And so I thinke doth euery souldier here.

*All.* Cusaies counsell is better then Achitophels.

*Abs.* Then march we after Cusaies counsell all,  
Sound trumpets through the bounds of Israel,  
And muster all the men will serue the King,  
That Absalon may glut his longing soule  
With sole fruition of his fathers crowne.

*Exeunt.*

*Ach.* Ill shall they fare that follow thy attempts,  
That skorne the counsell of Achitophel.

*Reſtat Cusay.*

*Cusay.* Thus hath the power of Iacobs iealous God  
Fulfil'd his seruant Dauids desires by me,  
And brought Achitophels aduise to scorne.

*Enter Sadec, Abiathar, Ahimaas, and Iemathan.*

*Sadec.* God saue lord Cusay, and direct his zeale  
To purchase Dauids conquest gainst his sonne.

*Abia.* What secrets hast thou gleande from Absalon.

*Cusay.* These sacred priests that beare the arke of God,  
Achitophel aduised him in the night

To



*David and Bethsabe.*

To let him chuse twelue thousand fighting men,  
And he would come on David at vnwares,  
While he was wearie with his violent toile:  
But I aduise to get a greater host,  
And gather men from Dan to Bersabe,  
To come vpon him strongly in the fields,  
Then send Ahimaas and Ionathan  
To signifie these secrets to the King,  
And will him not to stay this night abroad,  
But get him ouer Iordane presently,  
Least he and all his people kisse the sword.

*Sadoc.* Then goe Ahimaas and Ionathan,  
And straight conuey this message to the King.

*Ahim.* Father we will, if Absalons cheefe spies  
Preuent not this deuise, and stay vs here. *Exeunt.*

*Semei solus.*

*Semei.* The man of Israel, that hath rul'd as King,  
Or rather as the Tyrant of the land,  
Bolstering his hatefull head vpon the throne,  
That God vnworthily hath blest him with,  
Shall now I hope, lay it as low as hell,  
And be depos'd from his detested chaire.  
O that my bosome could by nature beare,  
A sea of poyson to be powr'd vpon  
His curst head that sacred baulme hath grac'd,  
And consecrated King of Israel:  
Or would my breath were made the smoke of hell,  
Infected with the sighs of damned soules,  
Or with the reeking of that serpents gorge,  
That feeds on adders, toads, and venomous roots,  
That as I opened my reuenging lips  
To curse the sheepeheard for his Tyrannie,  
My words might cast rancke poyson to his pores,  
And make his swolne and ranckling sinewes cracke,  
Like to the combat blowes that breake the clouds,  
When Ioues stout champions fight with fire,

*Sec*

*David and Bersabe.*

See where he commeth, that my soule abhors.  
I haue prepar'd my pocket full of stones  
To cast at him, mingled with earth and dust,  
Which bursting with disdain, I greet him with.

*David, Ioab, Abysai, Ithay, with others.*

*Semei.* Come forth thou murderer and wicked man,  
The Lord hath brought vpon thy cursed head  
The guiltlesse blood of Saule and all his sonnes,  
Whose royall throne thy basenesse hath vsurpt,  
And to reuenge it deeply on thy soule,  
The Lord hath giuen the kingdome to thy sonne;  
And he shall wreake the traitrous wrongs of Saule,  
Euen as thy sinne hath still importund heaven,  
So shall thy murders and adulterie  
Be punisht in the sight of Israel,  
As thou deseru'st with blood, with death, and hell.

*Hence murderer, hence, he threw at him.*

*Abis.* Why doth his dead dog curse my lord the King,  
Let me alone to take away his head.

*Da.* Why medleth thus the son of Zeruia  
To interrupt the action of our God?  
Semei vseth me with this reproch,  
Because the Lord hath sent him to reprove  
The sinnes of David, printed in his browes,  
With blood that blusseth for his conscience guilt,  
Who dares then aske him why he curseth me?

*Semei.* If then thy conscience tell thee thou hast sinned,  
And that thy life is odious to the world,  
Command thy followers to shun thy face,  
And by thy selfe here make away thy soule,  
That I may stand and glorie in thy shame.

*Da.* I am not desperate Semei like thy selfe,  
But trust vnto the couenant of my God,  
Founded on mercie with repentance built,  
And finish't with the glorie of my soule.

*Semei.*



*David and Bersabe.*

*Semei.* A murder, and hope for mercie in thy end  
Hate and destruction sit vpon thy browes  
To watch the issue of thy damned ghost,  
Which with thy latest gaspe theile take and reare,  
Hurling in euery paine of hell a peece.  
Hence murder, thou shame to Israel,  
Foule lecher, drunkard, plague to heauen and earth.

*He throwes at him.*

*Isab.* What is it pietie in Dauids thoughts,  
So to abhorre from lawes of policie  
In this extremitie of his distresse,  
To giue his subiects cause of carelesnesse,  
Send hence the dog with sorrow to his graue.

*David.* Why should the sons of Zerua seeke to checke  
His spirit which the Lord hath thus inspir'd:  
Behold my sonne which issued from my flesh,  
With equall furie seekes to take my life.  
How much more then the sonne of Iemini,  
Chiefely since he doth nought but Gods command,  
It may be he will looke on me this day  
With gracious eyes, and for his cursing blesse,  
The heart of David in his bitternesse.

*Semei.* What doest thou fret my soule with sufferance?  
O that the soules of Isboseth and Abner,  
Which thou sentst swimming to their graues in bloud,  
With wounds fresh bleeding, gasping for reuenge,  
Were here to execute my burning hate:  
But I will hunt thy foot with curses still,  
Hence Monster, Murderer, Mirror of Contempt.

*He throwes dust againe.*

*Enter Ahimaas and Jonathan.*

*Ahim.* Long life to David, to his enemies death.

*Da.* Welcome Ahimaas and Jonathan,  
What newes sends Cusay to thy lord the King.

*Ahim.* Cusay would wish my lord the King,

G

To

*Dauid and Bethsabe.*

To passe the riuer Iordane presently,  
Least he and all his people perish here.  
For wise Achitophel hath counsel'd Absalon  
To take aduantage of your wearie armes,  
And come this night vpon you in the fields.  
But yet the Lord hath made his counsell skorne,  
And Cusaies pollicie with praise preferd,  
Which was to number euery Israelite,  
And so assault you in their pride of strength.

*Ionat.* Abiathar besides intreats the King  
To send his men of warre against his sonne,  
And hazard not his person in the field.

*Dauid.* Thankes to Abiathar, and to you both,  
And to my Cusay, whom the Lord requite,  
But tenne times treble thankes to his soft hand,  
Whose pleasant touch hath made my heart to dance,  
And play him praises in my zealous breast,  
That turnd the counsell of Achitophel  
After the praiers of his seruants lips.  
Now will we passe the riuer all this night,  
And in the morning sound the voice of warre,  
The voice of bloudie and vnkindly warre.

*Ioab.* Then tell vs how thou wilt deuide thy men,  
And who shall haue the speciall charge herein.

*Dauid.* Ioab, thy selfe shall for thy charge conduct,  
The first third part of all my valiant men,  
The second shall Abisaies valour lead,  
The third faire Itay, which I most should grace,  
For comfort he hath done to Dauids woes,  
And I my selfe will follow in the midst.

*Itay.* That let not Dauid, for though we should flie,  
Tenne thousand of vs were not halfe so much  
Esteem'd with Dauids enemies, as himselfe,  
Thy people louing thee, denie thee this.

*Dauid.* What seemes them best, when that will Dauid doe,  
But now my lords and captaines heare his voice

That



*David and Bethsabe.*

That neuer yet pierst pittious heauen in vaine,  
Then let it not slip lightly through your eares,  
For my sake spare the young man Absalon.  
Ioab thy selfe didst once vse friendly words  
To reconcile my heart incens't to him,  
If then thy loue be to thy kinsman sound,  
And thou wilt proue a perfit Israelite,  
Friend him with deeds, and touch no haire of him,  
Not that fair haire with which the wanton winds  
Delight to play, and loues to make a curle,  
Wherein the Nightingales would build their nests,  
And make sweet bowers in euery golden tresse,  
To sing their loue euery night asleepe.  
O spoile not Ioab, Ioues faire ornaments,  
Which he hath sent to solace Dauids soule.  
The best ye see (my lords) are swift to sinne,  
To sinne our feet are washt with milke of Roes,  
And dried againe with coales of lightening.  
O Lord thou seest the proudest sinnes, poore slane,  
And with his bridle, pulst him to the graue,  
For my sake then spare louely Absalon.

*Ish,* Wee will my lord for thy sake fauour him.

*Exeunt.*

*Achitophel solus with a halter.*

*Achi.* Now hath Achitophel orderd his house,  
And taken leaue of euery pleasure there,  
Hereon depends Achitophels delights,  
And in this circle must his life be closde.  
The wise Achitophel, whose counsell prou'd  
Euer as sound for fortunate successe,  
As if men askt the Oracle of God,  
Is now vsde like the foole of Israel,  
Then set thy angrie soule vpon her wings,  
And let her flie into the shade of death,  
And for my death, let heauen for euer weepe,

*David and Bersabe.*

Making huge flouds vpon the land I leaue,  
To rauish them, and all their fairest fruits.  
Let all the sighs I breath'd for this disgrace,  
Hang on my hedges like eternall mists,  
As mourning garments for their maisters death.  
Ope earth, and take thy miserable sonne  
Into the bowels of thy curst wombe,  
Once in a surfet thou diddest spue him forth,  
Now for fell hunger sucke him in againe,  
And be his bodie poyson to thy vaines,  
And now thou hellish instrument of heauen,  
Once execute th'arrest of Ioues iust doome,  
And stop his breast that curseth Israel.

*Exit.*

*Abfalon, Amasa, with all his traine.*

*Abf.* Now for the crowne and throne of Israel,  
To be confirmd with vertue of my sword,  
And writ with Dauids bloud vpon the blade,  
Now Ioue let forth the golden firmament,  
And looke on him with all thy fierie eyes,  
Which thou hast made to giue their glories light,  
To shew thou louest the vertue of thy hand,  
Let fall a wreath of starres vpon my head,  
Whose influence may gouerne Israel,  
With state exceeding all her other Kings.  
Fight lords and captaines, that your soueraignes face  
May shine in honour brighter then the sunne,  
And with the vertue of my beauious raies,  
Make this faire land as fruitfull as the fields,  
That with sweet milke and hony ouerflowd.  
God in the whissing of a pleasant wind,  
Shall march vpon the tops of Mulberie trees,  
To coole all breasts that burne with any greeses,  
As whylome he was good to Moyles men.  
By day the Lord shall sit within a cloud,  
To guide your footsteps to the fields of ioy,

*And*



*David and Bersabe.*

And in the night a piller bright as fire  
Shall goe before you like a second sunne,  
Wherein the essence of his godhead is,  
That day and night you may be brought to peace,  
And neuer swarue from that delightfome path,  
That leads your soules to perfect happinesse.  
This shall he doe forioy when I am King:  
Then fight braue captaines that these ioies may flie  
Into your bosomes with sweet victorie. *Exeunt.*

*The bastell, and Absalon hangs by the haire.*

What angrie angel sitting in these shades,  
Hath laid his cruell hands vpon my haire,  
And holds my body thus twixt heauen and earth?  
Hath Absalon no souldier neere his hand,  
That may vntwine me this vnpleasant curle,  
Or wound this tree that rauislieth his lord?  
O God behold the glorie of thy hand,  
And choicest fruit of Natures workmanship,  
Hang like a rotten branch vpon this tree,  
Fit for the axe, and ready for the fire.  
Since thou withholdst all ordinarie helpe  
To lose my bodie from this bond of death,  
O let my beautie fill these sencelesse places,  
With sence and power to lose me from this plague,  
And worke some wonder to preuent his death,  
Whose life thou madst a speciall miracle.

*Ioab with another souldier.*

*Sould.* My lord I saw the young prince Absalon  
Hang by the haire vpon a shadie oke,  
And could by no meanes get himselfe vnloose,  
*Ioab.* Why ilewst thou not the wicked Absalon,  
That rebell to his father and to heauen,  
That so I might haue giuen thee for thy paines

*David and Bethsabe.*

Tenne silver sickles, and a golden waist.

*Scald.* Not for a thousand sickles would I slay  
The sonne of Dauid, whom his father chargd,  
Nor thou Abisay, nor the sonne of Gath,  
Should touch with stroke of deadly violence.  
The charge was giuen in hearing of vs all,  
And had I done it, then I know thy selfe,  
Before thou wouldst abide the Kings rebuke,  
Wouldst haue accus'd me as a man of death.

*Ioab.* I must not now stand trifling here with thee.

*Abf.* Helpe Ioab, helpe, O helpe thy Absalon,  
Let not thy angrie thoughts be laid in blood,  
In blood of him, that sometimes nourisht thee,  
And softned thy sweet heart with friendly loue,  
O giue me once againe my fathers sight,  
My deereft father, and my princely soueraigne,  
That shedding teares of blood before his face,  
The ground may witnesse, and the heauens record,  
My last submission sound and full of ruth.

*Ioab.* Rebell to nature, hate to heauen and earth,  
Shall I giue helpe to him, that thirsts the soule  
Of his deere father, and my soueraigne lord?  
Now see the Lord hath tangled in a tree  
The health and glorie of thy stubborne heart,  
And made thy pride curbd with a sencelesse plant,  
Now Absalon how doth the Lord regard  
The beautie wherevpon thy hope was built,  
And which thou thoughtst his grace did glorie in?  
Findst thou not now with feare of instant death,  
That God affects not any painted shape,  
Or goodly personage, when the vertuous soule  
Is stufte with naught but pride and stubbornnesse?  
But preach I to thee, while I should reuenge  
Thy cursed sinne that staineth Israel,  
And makes her fields blush with her childrens blood?  
Take that as part of thy deserued plague,

Which



*David and Bethsabe.*

Which worthily no torment can inflict.

*Abs.* O Ioab, Ioab, cruell ruthlesse Ioab,  
Herewith thou woundst thy Kingly soueraignes heart,  
Whose heavenly temper hates his childrens bloud,  
And will be sicke I know for Absalon,  
O my deere father, that thy melting eyes  
Might pierce this thicker to behold thy sonne,  
Thy deereft sonne gor'de with a mortall dart:  
Yet Ioab pittie me, pittie my father, Ioab,  
Pittie his soules distresse that mournes my life,  
And will be dead I know to heare my death.

*Ioab.* If he were so remorsefull of thy state,  
Why sent he me against thee with the sword?  
All Ioab meanes to pleasure thee withall,  
Is to dispatch thee quickly of thy paine,  
Hold Absalon, Ioabs pittie is in this,  
In this prowde Absalon is Ioabs loue.

*He goes out.*

*Abs.* Such loue, such pittie Israels God send thee,  
And for his loue to Dauid pittie me,  
Ah my deere father, see thy bowels bleed,  
See death assault thy deereft Absalon,  
See, pittie, pardon, pray for Absalon.

*Enter five or sixe souldiers.*

See where the rebell in his glorie hangs,  
Where is the vertue of thy beautie Absalon,  
Will any of vs here now feare thy lookes?  
Or be in loue with that thy golden haire,  
Wherein was wrapt rebellion gainst thy fire,  
And cords prepar'd to stop thy fathers breath?  
Our captaine Ioab hath begun to vs,  
And heres an end to thee, and all thy sinnes.  
Come let vs take the beauteous rebell downe,  
And in some ditch amidst this darke some wood,  
Burie his bulke beneath a heape of stones,  
Whose stonie heart did hunt his fathers death.

*Enter*

## David and Bersabe.

*Enter in triumph with drum and ensigne, Ioab, Abysai,  
and souldiers to Absalon.*

*Ioab.* Well done tall souldiers take the Traitor downe,  
And in this myerieditch interre his bones,  
Couering his hatefull breast with heapes of stones,  
This shadie thicket of darke Ephrami  
Shall euer lower on his cursed graue.  
Night Rauens and Owles shall ring his farall knell,  
And sit exclaiming on his damned soule,  
There shall they heape their preyes of Carrion,  
Till all his graue be clad with stinking bones,  
That it may loth the sence of euery man,  
So shall his end breed horror to his name,  
And to his traitrous fact eternall shame.

*Exit,*

*s. Chorus.*

Oh dreadfull president of his iust doome,  
Whose holy heart is neuer toucht with ruth  
Of fickle beautie, or of glorious shapes,  
But with the vertue of an vpright soule,  
Humble and zealous in his inward thoughts,  
Though in his person loathsome and deform'd.  
Now since this storie lends vs other store,  
To make a third discourse of Dauids life,  
Adding thereto his most renowned death,  
And all their deaths, that at his death he iudgd,  
Here end we this, and what here wants to please,  
We will supplie with treble willingnesse.

*Absalon with three or foure of his seruants or gentlemen.*

*Abf.* What boots it Absalon, ynhappy Absalon,  
Sighing I say what boots it Absalon,  
To haue disclos'd a farre more worthy wombe

*Then*



## David and Bethsabe.

*Trumpets sound, enter Ioab, Ahimaas, Cusay,  
Amasa, with all the rest.*

*Ioab.* Souldiers of Israel; and ye sonnes of Iuda,  
That haue contended in these irkesome broiles,  
And ript old Israels bowels with your swords:  
The godlesse generall of your stubborne armes  
Is brought by Israels helper to the graue:  
A graue of shame, and skorne of all the Tribes,  
Now then to saue your honour from the dust,  
And keepe your blouds in temper by your bones,  
Let Ioabs ensigne shroud your manly heads,  
Direct your eies, your weapons, and your hearts  
To guard the life of David from his foes.  
Error hath maskt your much too forward minds,  
And you hauee find against the chosen state,  
Against his life, for whom your liues are blest,  
And followed an vsurper to the field,  
In whose iust death your deaths are threatened,  
But Ioab pitties your disordered soules,  
And therefore offers pardon, peace, and loue,  
To all that will be friendly reconcil'de  
To Israels weale, to David, and to heauen.  
Amasa, thou art leader of the host,  
That vnder Absalon haue raisde their armes:  
Then be a captaine wise and pollicicke,  
Carefull and louing for thy souldiers liues,  
And lead them to this honourable league.

*Amasa.* I will, at least Ile doe my best,  
And for the gracious offer thou hast made,  
I giue thee thanks as much as for my head.  
Then you deceiud poore soules of Israel,  
Since now ye see the errors you incurd,  
With thanks and due submission be appeasde,  
And as ye see your captaines president

H

Here

*David and Bersabe.*

Here cast me then our swords at Iobas feet,  
Submitting with all zeale and residence  
Our goods and bodies to his gracious hande.

*All stand vp.*

*Iob.* Stand vp and take ye all your swords againe,  
David and Iob shall be blest herein.

*Iona.* Now let me goe enforme my lord the King,  
How God hath freed him from his enemies.

*Iob.* Another time Ahimaas, not now,  
But Cusay goe thy selfe, and tell the King  
The happie messlage of our good successe.

*Cus.* I will my lord, and thanke thee for thy grace.

*Exit Cusay.*

*Iona.* What if thy seruant should goe to my lord?

*Iob.* What newes hast thou to bring since he is gone?

*Iona.* Yet doe Ahimaas so much content,  
That he may run about so sweet a charge. *Exit.*

*Iob.* Run if thou wilt, and peace be with thy steps,  
Now follow, that you may salute the King  
With humble hearts and reconciled soules.

*Ama.* We follow Iob to our gracious King,  
And him our swords shall honour to our deaths.

*Exeunt.*

*David, Bethsabe, Salomon, Nathan, Adonia, Chileab,  
with their traine.*

*Beth.* What meanes my lord, the lampe of Israel,  
From whose bright eyes all eyes receiue their light,  
To dim the glory of his sweet aspects,  
And paint his countenance with his hearts distresse?  
Why should his thoughts retaine a sad conceit,  
When euery pleasure kneeles before his throne,  
And sues for sweet acceptance with his grace,  
Take but your Lute, and make the mountaines dance,  
Retting the sunnes sphere, and restraine the clouds,

*Giue*



*David and Bersabe.*

Giue eares to trees, make sauage Lyons tame,  
Impose still silence to the loudest winds,  
And fill the fairest day with foulest stormes,  
Then why should passions of much meaner power,  
Beare head against the heart of Israel.

*Da.* Faire Bersabe, thou mightst increase the strength,  
Of these thy arguments drawne from my skill,  
By vrging thy sweet sight to my conceits,  
Whose vertue euer serud for sacred baulme  
To cheere my pinings past all earthly ioies,  
But Bethsabe, the daughter of the highest,  
Whose beautie builds the towers of Israel,  
Shee that in chaines of pearle and vnicorne,  
Leads at her traine the ancient golden world,  
The world that Adam held in Paradise,  
Whose breath refineth all infectious aires,  
And makes the meddowes smile at her repaire.  
Shee, Shee my dearest Bethsabe,  
Faire peace, the goddesse of our graces here,  
Is fled the streets of faire Ierusalem,  
The fields of Israel, and the heart of David,  
Leading my comforts in her golden chaines,  
Linckt to the life and soule of Absalon.

*Beth.* Then is the pleasure of my soueraignes heart,  
So wrapt within the bosome of that sonne,  
That Salomon, whom Israels God affects,  
And gaue the name vnto him for his loue,  
Should be no salue to comfort Dauids soule?

*Da.* Salomon (my loue) is Dauids lord,  
Or God hath nam'd him lord of Israel  
In him (for that, and since he is thy sonne)  
Must Dauid needs be pleased at the heart,  
And he shall surely sit vpon my throne :  
But Absalon the beautie of my bones,  
Faire Absalon the counterfeite of loue,  
Sweet Absalon, the image of content,

*David and Bethsabe.*

Must claime a portion in his fathers care,  
And be in life and death King Davids sonne.

*Nat.* Yet as my lord hath said, let Salomon raigne,  
Whom God in naming, hath annointed King.  
Now is he apt to learne th' eternall lawes,  
Whose knowledge being rooted in his youth,  
Will beautifie his age with glorious fruits,  
While Absalon incest with gracelesse pride,  
Vsurpes and stains the kingdome with his sinne,  
Let Salomon be made thy staffe of age,  
Faile Israels rest, and honour of thy race.

*Da.* Tell me my Salomon, wilt thou embrace  
Thy fathers precepts graued in thy heart,  
And satisfie my zeale to thy renowne,  
With practise of such sacred principles  
As shall concerne the state of Israel?

*Sal.* My royall father, if the heavenly zeale  
Which for my welfare seeds vpon your soule,  
Were not sustained with vertue of mine owne,  
If the sweet accents of your cheerefull voice  
Should not each hower beat vpon mine eares  
As sweetly as the breath of heauen to him  
That gaspeth scorched with the Summers sunne,  
I should be guiltie of vnpardoned sinne,  
Fearing the plague of heauen, and shame of earth:  
But since I vow my selfe to learne the skill  
And holy secrets of his mightie hand  
Whose cunning tunes the musicke of my soule,  
It would content me (father) first to learne  
How th' eternall fram'd the firmament,  
Which bodies lead their influence by fire?  
And which are fill'd with hoarie Winters yse?  
What signe is raignie, and what starre is faire?  
Why by the rules of true proportion  
The yeare is still diuided into months,  
The months to daies, the daies to certaine howers?

What



*David and Bethsabe.*

What fruitfull race shall fill the future world ?  
Or for what time shall this round building stand ?  
What Magistrates, what Kings shall keepe in awe  
Mens minds with bridles of th' eternall law ?

*Da.* Wade not too farre my boy in waues too deepe,  
The feeble eyes of our aspiring thoughts  
Behold things present, and record things past :  
But things to come, exceed our humane reach,  
And are not painted yet in angels eyes :  
For those, submit thy sence, and say, Thou power  
That now art framing of the future world,  
Knowest all to come, not by the course of heauen,  
By fraile coniectures of inferiour signes,  
By monstrous fouds, by flights and flocks of birds,  
By bowels of a sacrificed beast,  
Or by the figures of some hidden art :  
But by a true and naturall presage,  
Laying the ground and perfect architect  
Of all our actions now before thine eyes,  
From Adam to the end of Adams seed,  
O heauen protect my weakenesse with thy strength,  
So looke on me that I may view thy face,  
And see these secrets written in thy browes.  
O sun come dart thy raies vpon my moone,  
That now mine eyes eclipsed to the earth,  
May brightly be refin'd and shine to heauen.  
Transforme me from this flesh, that I may liue  
Before my death, regenerate with thee.  
O thou great God, rauish my earthly sprite,  
That for the time a more then humane skill  
May feed the Organons of all my sence,  
That when I thinke, thy thoughts may be my guide,  
And when I speake, I may be made by choice  
The perfect eccho of thy heauenly voice.  
Thus say my sonne, and thou shalt learne them all.

*Sals.* A secret fury rauisheth my soule,

*David and Bersabe.*

Lifting my mind aboue her humane bounds,  
And as the Eagle roused from her stand,  
With violent hunger (cowering in the aire)  
Seaseth her feathered prey, and thinkes to feed,  
But seeing then a cloud beneath her feet,  
Lets fall the foule, and is emboldened  
With eies intentiue to be dare the sun,  
And stieth close vnto his stately sphere:  
So Salomon mounted on the burning wings  
Of zeale deuine, lets fall his mortall food,  
And cheeres his senses with celestially aire,  
Treads in the golden starrie Labyrinth,  
And holds his eyes fixt on Iehouaes browes,  
Good father teach me further what to doe.

*Nath.* See Dauid how his haughtie spirit mounts  
Euen now of heighth to wield a diademe,  
Then make him promise, that he may succeed,  
And rest old Israels bones from broiles of warre.

*Dauid.* Nathan thou Prophet, sprung from Iesses roote,  
I promise thee, and louely Bethsabe,  
My Salomon shall gouerne after me.

*Beth.* He that hath toucht thee with this righteous thought  
Preserue the harbour of thy thoughts in peace.

*Enter Mess.*

*Mess.* My lord, thy seruants of thy watch haue seene  
One running hither ward from forth the warres.

*Dauid.* If hee bee come alone, he bringeth newes.

*Mess.* Another hath thy seruant seene my lord,  
Whose running much resembles Sadoes sonne.

*Da.* He is a good man, and good tidings brings.

*Enter Ahimaas.*

*Ahim.* Peace and content be with my lord the King,  
Whom Israels God hath blest with victory.

*Da.* Tell me Ahimaas, liues my Absalon?

*Ahim.* I saw a troupe of souldiours gathered,  
But know not what the tumult might import.

*Dauid.*



*'David and Bersabe.*

*Dauid.* Stand by, vntill some other may informe  
The heart of Dauid with a happie truth.

*Enter Cusay.*

*Cusay.* Happinesse and honour liue with Dauids soule,  
Whom God hath blest with conquest of his foes.

*Dauid.* But Cusay liues the yong man Absalon?

*Cus.* The stubborne enemies to Dauids peace,  
And all that cast their darts against his crowne,  
Fare euer like the young man Absalon,  
For as he rid the woods of Ephraim  
(Which fought for thee as much as all thy men)  
His haire was tangled in a shadie oake,  
And hanging there (by Ioab and his men)  
Sustained the stroke of well deserued death.

*Dauid.* Hath Absalon sustained the stroke of death?  
Die Dauid for the death of Absalon,  
And make these cursed newes the bloody darts,  
That through his bowels rip thy wretched breast.  
Hence Dauid, walke the solitarie woods,  
And in some Cedars shade the thunder flew,  
And fire from heauen hath made his branches blacke  
Sit mourning the decease of Absalon,  
Against the body of that blasted plant  
In thousand shiuers breake thy yuorie Lute,  
Hanging thy stringlesse harpe vpon his boughs,  
And through the hollow saplesse sounding truncke,  
Bellow the torments that perplexe thy soule.  
There let the winds sit sighing till they burst,  
Let tempest muffled with a cloud of pitch,  
Threaten the Forrests with her hellish face,  
And (mounted fiercely on her yron wings)  
Rend vp the wretched engine by the roots  
That held my dearest Absalon to death.  
Then let them tesse my broken Lute to heauen,  
Euen to his hands that beats me with the strings,  
To shew how sadly his poore sheepeheard singe.

*He*

*David and Bethsabe.*

*He goes to his pavillion, and sits close a while.*

*Beth.* Die Bethsabe to see thy David mourne,  
To heare his tunes of anguish and of hell,  
O helpe my David, helpe thy Bethsabe,

*She kneeles downe.*

Whose heart is pierced with thy breathie swords,  
And bursts with burthen of tenne thousand griefes.  
Now sits thy sorrowes sucking of my blood,  
O that it might be poison to their powers,  
And that their lips might draw my bosome drie,  
So Davids loue might ease him, though she die.

*Nat.* These violent passions come not from above,  
David and Bethsabe offend the highest,  
To mourne in this immeasurable sort.

*Dau.* O Absalon, Absalon, O my sonne, my sonne,  
Would God that I had died for Absalon:  
But he is dead, ah dead, Absalon is dead,  
And David liues to die for Absalon.

*He lookes forth, and at the end sits close againe.*

*Enter Ioab, Abisay, Itay, with their traine.*

*Ioab.* Why lies the Queene so prostrate on the ground?  
Why is this companie so Tragicke hew'd?  
Why is the King now absent from his men?  
And marcheth not in triumph through the gates?

*He vnfoldes the pavillion.*

David awake, if sleepe haue shut thine eyes,  
Sleepe of affection, that thou canst not see  
The honour offerd to the victors head,  
Ioab brings conquest pierced on his speare,  
And ioy from all the Tribes of Israel.

*David.* Thou man of blood, thou sepulchre of death,  
Whose marble breast intombe my bowels quicke,  
Did I not charge thee, nay intreat thy hand,  
Euen for my sake to spare my Absalon?  
And hast thou now in spite of Davids health,

And



*David and Bersabe.*

And skorne to doe my heart some happinesse,  
Giuen him the sword, and spilt his purple soule?

*Ioab.* What? irkes it Dauid, that he victor breaths,  
That Iuda and the fields of Israel,  
Should cleanse their faces from their childrens bloud?  
What art thou wearie of thy royall rule?  
Is Israels throne a Serpent in thine eyes,  
And he that set thee there, so farre from thanks,  
That thou must curse his seruant for his sake?  
Hast thou not said, that as the morning light,  
The cloudlesse morning, so should be thine house,  
And not as flowers by the brightest raine,  
Which growes vp quickly, and as quickly fades?  
Hast thou not said, the wicked are as thornes,  
That cannot be preserued with the hand,  
And that the man shall touch them, must be armd  
With coats of yron, and garments made of Steele,  
Or with the shaft of a defenced speare?  
And art thou angrie he is now cut off,  
That lead the guiltlesse swarming to their deaths,  
And was more wicked then an host of men?  
Aduance thee from thy melancholy denne,  
And decke thy bodie with thy blisfull robes,  
Or by the Lord that swaies the heauen, I swear,  
Ile lead thine armies to another King,  
Shall cheere them for their princely chiuallrie,  
And not sit daunted, frowning in the darke,  
When his faire lookes, with Oyle and Wine refreshr,  
Should dart into their bosomes glad some beames,  
And fill their stomackes with triumphant feasts,  
That when elsewhere sterne warre shall sound his trumpe,  
And call another battaile to the field,  
Fame still may bring thy valiant souldiers home,  
And for their seruice happily confesse  
She wanted worthy trumpes to sound their prowesse;  
Take thou this course and liue, refuse, and die.

*David and Bersabe.*

*Abisay.* Come brother, let him sit there till he sincke,  
Some other shall aduance the name of Ioab.

*Beth.* O stay my lords, stay, David mournes no more,  
But riseth to giue honour to your acts. *Offers to goe out.*

*David.* Then happie art thou Davids fairest sonne,  
That freed from the yoke of earthly toiles,  
And sequestred from sence of humane sinnes,  
Thy soule shall ioy the sacred cabinet  
Of those deuine Ideas, that present  
Thy changed spirit with a heauen of blisse.  
Then thou art gone, ah thou art gone my sonne  
To heauen I hope my Absalon is gone,  
Thy soule there plac'd in honour of the Saints  
Or angels clad with immortalitie,  
Shall reape a seuenfold grace, for all thy greefes,  
Thy eyes now no more eyes but shining stars,  
Shall decke the flaming heauens with nouell lampes,  
There shalt thou tast the drinke of Seraphins,  
And cheere thy feelings with archangels food,  
Thy day of rest, thy holy Sabbath day  
Shall be eternall, and the curtaine drawne,  
Thou shalt behold thy soueraigne face to face,  
With wonder knit in triple vnitie,  
Vnitie infinite and innumerable,  
Courage braue captaines, Ioabs tale hath stir'd,  
And made the suit of Israel preferd.

*Ioab.* Brauely resolut and spoken like a King,  
Now may old Israel, and his daughters sing.

*Exeunt.*

*FINIS.*



